film art

nternational
eview of the
dvance-guard
inema

4

summer 1934
ONE SHILLING

" La Barricade " Un nouveau film francais

film art—**the new review!**

NOTE: THESE OPINIONS ARE FROM PERSONS OTHER THAN CONTRIBUTORS, AT ANY RATE UP TO THE PRESENT TIME.

" It gives us great pleasure to inform you that we think highly of your periodical and like its manner of expression and general tone ".

The U.F.A. Film Corporation.

" . . . those who wish to keep in touch with what the advance-guard is doing in different lands will find a comprehensive courier in this paper and some of the underlying philosophy of the art is acutely discussed . . . . "

The Manchester Guardian.

" . . . beautifully and modernly got-up . . . . . exceptionally well-edited . . . . . a brilliant paper . . . "

Literary Review.

" An eloquent testimony to the growing international demand for independent film magazines is found in the appearance of " FILM ART ", a new, outspoken, excellently edited and illustrated quarterly . . . . "

L. J. Jordan, editor of " Filmliga " (Holland).

" . . . a highly argumentative and provocative periodical "

New Britain.

" vivante, énergique . . . . une revue excellente "

George Deluc.

" Film Art . . . . contains much good material and is deserving of support . . . . . ' Film : definition ' in no. 2 would do much to clarify many spectators' thoughts on the direction which the film, as art, is to take ".

Frederick B. Maxham in " The Windsor Quarterly "

" Film Art . . . elucidating the attitude of those who accept the kinema as containing possibilities, as yet not fully realised, as a new form of pure art expression . . . "

The Otago Times (New Zealand).

" . . . I like your paper—because your point of view is intelligent—because your presentation is in time-keeping with your point of view. I wish you every success ".

E. McKnight Kauffer.

" What a change!—a film mag that isn't interested in Hollywood love-affairs, seductions, and marriage problems . . . . some of the articles are exceptionally bright and interesting, stable reviews, and certain of the photos are magnificent ".

The Quarter.

" I am greatly interested in your attempts to bring fresh-air into the drawing-room atmosphere of cinema ".

Leontine Sagan.

" I have your fine magazine . . . I wish you luck and can't see why " film art " will not be successful ".

J. Louis Stoll (editor of " A Year Magazine ")

" Best wishes for the success of " Film Art " which I find original, entertaining and very much worthwhile ".

Robert Flaherty.

We wish to sincerely thank all those readers who so kindly sent letters of appreciation after the publication of our last number (actually no. 3—theoretically the new no. 1). As we have received about 70 such letters it is, owing to lack of time, impossible to reply personally to them all. And we therefore wish now to thank those who wrote, and even telephoned, sending us their appreciative remarks and valuable criticism.

While on this point we would like to stress that we are only too pleased to render assistance in any matters in which we are able. We particularly request that those who send in inquiries enclose a stamped and addressed envelope.

Editor.

NUMBER FOUR
summer · nineteen thirty-four

international review of advance-guard cinema

film art

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we must thank the many readers who send us in articles. it is, unfortunately, difficult to find room for many, at present. when we have further increased our circulation we shall be able to print more. it is also our desire to publish many more photographs from the best films.

to our readers in foreign countries who may have difficulty in obtaining copies we advise direct application to our publishing office (if in france to our central european agents, if in america to our american agents).

all communications and enquiries should be addressed to the editor, who may be seen only by appointment.

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the lay-out of *film art* is by b. vivian braun. mention should be made of the willing co-operation of the printers, d. white and son.

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amongst the many contributions in
film art 5
will be

an open letter to dr. goebbels from s. m. eisenstein

news and photos from the avant-garde fronts

articles by 1. moholy-nagy, arthur elton, bela belaz, etcetera

a survey of cinematic abstraction by b. vivian braun (held over from publication in this number) and illustrated with photographs from abstract films

world cinema: reviews and criticisms of films of all countries

published towards end of august

dynamic co-operation

V. I. PUDOVKIN

Many of our movie producers and creative workers consider the scenario to be the chief factor at the present stage of our cinematographic production.

Of course, this does not affect the decisive part of the regisseur. It simply means that, though we have reached a high average in the art of direction, we still lag behind literature and the drama in our ability to express in proper terms the burning political issues of our Soviet country. Our ability too, to cope with these issues with a depth and width of approach is still limited.

The causes are many, but there are a few fundamental ones. The most important is the fact that though we can name several dozen regisseurs perfectly competent to take charge of a picture, we have only a few qualified scenario writers.

On the other hand the long experience of our cinematographic organisations has shown that attempts to rely upon " spontaneous production ", i.e., upon the chance scenarios sent in by individual authors gave no positive results whatever. The percentage not only of complete scenarios, but even of possible scenario subjects was very small. Therefore, it seems quite natural that we should turn for assistance to the creative workers of literature, closely akin to us in all essentials. We have had many scenarios based upon works of literature, such as " Mother " by Sarchi and " Suburbia " (scenario by the author Finn, in collaboration with the regisseur Boris Barnet), " The Lifted Veil " by Shengelay, and others. If we shift through the literature at our disposal, we find much that has been written, or is in the process of being written might easily be mobilised to close up the breach in the scenario front.

It has been said that works of literature cannot be transferred to the screen without a thorough adaption by a well-qualified scenarist. This is only true if the author himself has no possibility of adapting his story to the demands of the cinema with the immediate collaboration of the future reggiseur. The film " Suburbia " was Finn's first piece of work for the screen and his close collaboration with Barnet resulted in a scenario fully satisfying the specific requirements of cinema.

I venture to affirm that a scenario (especially a sound scenario) is more akin to the short story, the sketch or even the novel than is the stage play.

The great mistake made by the leaders of our cinema organisations and our reggiseurs was the lack of organic contact with the workers of literature. Absurd as it may seem, the only form of contact existing until now was . . . the contract between the author and the literary department of some movie factory, containing the terms when the work was to be delivered by the author and the fees he was to receive. As a result the literary departments and the film regisseurs grumbled at the work for it was done without proper care or comprehension of the specific requirements of the cinema,

while after the picture was made, the author complained that his ideas had been distorted in order to satisfy the same unfortunate " specific requiremens ".

One must say, however, that although our writers are interested in cinematography and wish to work for the cinema we find they have very little natural understanding of the fundamental requirements of film. Not infrequently one meets singular contempt for the cinema, as a " primitive form of entertainment " undeserving of any serious creative effort. A year ago, in the course of a chance conversation with Alexi Tolstoi, one of our leading authors, he confessed to me that this was the first time he had ever talked seriously about cinema. Later a very similar admission was made to me by B. Romashov, the well-known playwright, who has since turned to scenario work.

Serious discussions on the common creative problems linking up literature with the art of cinema—an art so enormously important to us—are exceedingly rare. This is absurd and impermissible. The Association of Cinema Workers and the State Administration of Cinema Factories must eliminate this absurdity, since one of the ways to overcome shortage of scenarios lies in the energetic adaption of the treasures of literature.

Practical work in my opinion must proceed along the following lines: (a) Well organised meetings between cinema and literary workers to examine and criticise the more important pictures, scenarios and subjects. This must, of course, be done in such a manner as to ensure that these meetings will not turn into chance gatherings of uninterested people chosen at random; (b) That in connection with such gatherings there must be discussions on the general theoretical problems of film art; (c) In cinema production proper, the method of placing an impersonal " order " for a scenario with an author and the subsequent alteration of his work must be replaced by an active and effective collaboration between the author and the regisseur who is to take charge of the picture.

The practical outcome of this contact between the workers of cinema and of literature is still a matter for discussion, but such a profound organic connection is undoubtedly essential to the further development of the Soviet cinema.

We must not, whatever we do, rest content with the mere abstract recognition of the necessity of such a connection—we must immediately set about finding the concrete means of putting it into practice.

V. I. PUDOVKIN

summary of montage methods

H. A. V. BULLEID

" Montage " of a film is the art of assembling the pieces. The work should, of course, be done by the director. There are four categories of montage:

1. METRIC MONTAGE . . . the arrangement depending fundamentally on the absolute lengths of the pieces.
2. RYTHMIC MONTAGE . . . here the *content* and the *length* of each piece are factors of equal importance in the construction of the sequence.
3. TONAL MONTAGE . . . for this, the pieces are chosen and combined with reference to their " emotional-sound " content. That is, their *tone*. Thus, the paramount consideration in selecting the pieces is their individual effect upon the emotions of the spectator.
4. OVER-TONE MONTAGE . . . this form of montage, introduced by Eisenstein in " The General Line ", depends on the *sum total of the collective appeals of the pieces* (i.e., the metric, rhythmic, tonal appeal).

EXAMPLES:

1. The hay-cutting; the sawing-apart of the hut; from " The General Line ". The manifestation of patriotism in " The End of St. Petersburg."
2. The Odessa steps in " The Battleship Potemkin." also, the opening, rhythmic titles in " The General Line."
3. The rising of the mist, in " Potemkin "; the opening (country) scenes in " The End of St. Petersburg."
4. The separator sequence in " The General Line ". Here, the sum of the appeals of the pieces is utilised. The metric arrangement; the rhythm (even down to the inclusion of rhythmically-used titles); and the tonal content of the pieces (e.g., the turning handle, the spout, ever seeming larger, the swirling milk, the expectant, hopeful, and derisive faces of the onlookers).

Most correctly cut films contain examples of each on the first three montage categories; it is only the fourth, the over-tone method of montage, that seems to be still unexplored.

How is it to be used in the film drama? Often its use in the " General Line " is explained away as being merely an exaggerated propaganda use, in a specialised subject. One hears it said that it has no place in anything but propaganda-film, which should be designed to have a strong physiological effect upon the spectator.

This is nonsense.

To create a physiological effect—this is certainly one use of over-tone montage. Another use is to create excitement or enthusiasm from a subject not naturally exciting. This was an effect noticed in the Separator sequence in the " General Line ". One knew all the time that the separator would work successfully, yet the superb montage technique used by Eisenstein

had the effect of causing one to feel an extraordinary excitement and enthusiasm.

In my last film (amateur) I used over-tone montage as follows:

A man is driving his fiancée along an unknown road; she is urging him on to drive faster; soon (and of course the audience does not know this) the car will crash, due to a corner being taken too fast.

It is required, during the time when we see the car driving along and the girl saying " faster ", so to work upon the feelings of the audience that the moment of the actual crash will strike with a largely increased emotional impact.

This effect I obtain by means of over-tone montage.

The pieces consist of close-ups of the girl crying: " faster ", and the man smiling but looking anxious; travelling shots from the front of the car, at increasing speeds; and a title, in three increasing sizes of lettering, bearing the word: " FASTER ".

The content of the pieces, obtained by careful direction and photography, is of good tonal value rhythm is carefully observed, the titles being used rhythmically (in its last appearance being cut two frames title, two frames close-up, alternately) and metric arrangement is observed in parts, notably in runs of alternate close-ups, of uniformly decreasing lengths.

Thus, this is a case of over-tone montage. But a very simple case, owing to the simple nature of the subject, and the simple nature of the pieces.

This sequence, lasting two minutes, contains eighty cuts.

Its effect is pleasing and exciting, and I, for one, realise that I am only on the fringe of a profound subject.

NOTE. Synchronised dialogue upsets all these concepts, and is certainly redundant in true cinema.

" . . . . Of all the film journals I have seen (and I have seen quite a lot) I consider " film art " quite the most inspiring.

" Not for technicalities with which it does not pretend to deal, but for the beauty of its get-up, and the high tone of its articles . . . . "

MARIUS LYLE.

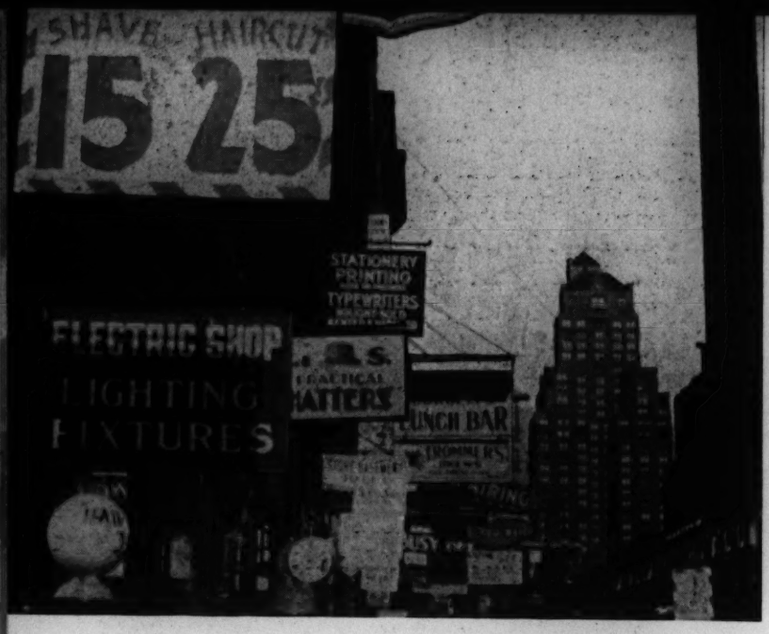
" . . . . lives up to its principles of artistic outspokenness . . . . "

Film Progress.

This wonderful still given to us by S. M. Eisenstein is an actual enlargement from the negative of the material for his proposed film—which became the mutilation " Thunder Over Mexico ".

Cet admirable cliché qui nous a été donné par S. M. Eisenstein, est l'agrandissement d'un negatif pris parmi les bandes d'un film proposé, . . . et qui, mutilé, devint " Tonnerre sur le Mexique ".

Diese schöne Photographie, die uns S. M. Eisenstein gegeben hat, ist eine Vergrösserung des Negativs fur seinen Film—, den verstümmelten " Donner über Mexiko ".



" As I Walk " Lewis Jacob's documentary of the social hell of a New York slum.

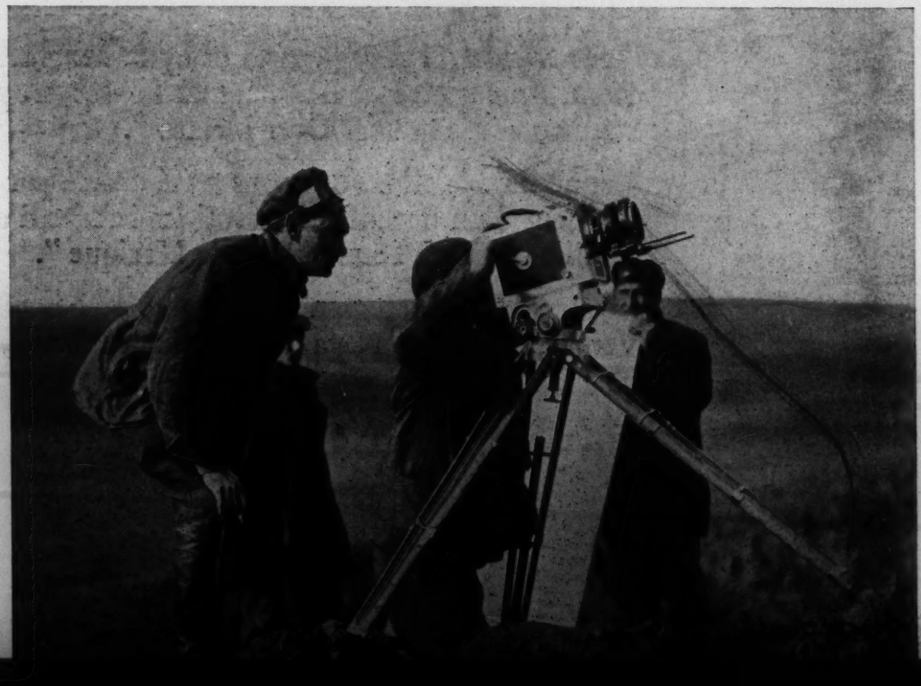
" En Promenade " par Lewis Jacobs, documentaire sur l'enfer social des ruelles miséreuses de New-York.

" Im Vorbeigehen ", Lewis Jacobs Dokument aus der sozialen Hölle einer armseligen New Yorker Gegend.

Pudovkin, who writes in this number, is seen directing on the left of this still.

A gauche du cliché, Pudovkin, qui a collaboré au présent numéro, en train de diriger une prise de vue.

Pudovkin, der in dieser Nummer schreibt, ist auf der linken Seite der Photographie.



films and internationalism

JOHN SYDNEY

" I'll put a girdle round about the Earth "
" Midsummer-Night's Dream "

The modern system of marriage and family life, which is modern only in that it is prevalent but is, nevertheless, entirely non-ethical in the light of modern culture, is as decadent as the sentimental patriotism and team spirit which, carried to the extreme, lie at the root of war. War is an issue between nations and a nation is only a large family but composed of the unit ' family ' instead of the unit ' individual ' and just as the degenerate family system is disintegrating so Internationalism bids for the eradication of intensive barriers between nations.

Now the basic principles of Internationalism obviously lie in a knowledge of other countries, their peoples and their psychology, and the most efficient medium for the spreading of this knowledge is without doubt the film. The full possibilities latent in films as educational media have yet to be realised and the mere fact that the sole function of the film to date, in any large way, has been for entertainment illustrates the fact that the industry is not yet out of embryo-form.

The commercial film has done an inestimable amount of good in spreading international sympathy and has awakened the thought and the eyes of the ' man-in-the-street ' to other countries and has broadened his outlook, but there is one particular group in cinematic entertainment which does more to further Internationalism than any other. This is composed of:—

(1) Travel pictures such as the Magic Carpet of Movietone Series.
(2) Programmes at News Theatres
(3) Propaganda films produced and shown as such.

Let us take section (2) first, the News Theatres, as in many cases this includes the first section. This sphere of entertainment is only three years old but its popularity is beginning, deservedly, to be realised. Consider the first of the news theatres to be opened in this country: on the site of the old Avenue Pavilion in Shaftesbury Avenue it is now known as the Movietone News Theatre and its 60 minutes' programme " puts a girdle round about the earth ". Pictures are shown of every country where an event of news importance or of unusual interest has occurred. Often a Magic Carpet release is also shown so that for one week interest is centred on one country in particular although the world review enlarges the scope of interest.

Now let us take section (3); Propaganda films. Most films are propaganda of one sort or another but in this section we should include only those films which admit to a definite didactic aim.

The example of this type which has most caught the eye of the general public, despite definite insufficiences, is " Damaged Lives " while John Grierson's productions for the now extinct Empire Marketing Board were fine

examples of cinematic propaganda put over with beauty.

We, however, are mostly concerned with the propaganda film where it furthers the cause of Internationalism and Peace. Nobody to-day doubts that war, should it come, will probably write " Finis " not only to civilisation but to every higher form of life on earth. Nobody imagines that there could be any good in war. Yet war is a very great danger. The farce of subsidised armament firms enjoys universal recognition, yet these firms are allowed to produce machines for dealing death to the very people with whose money they are run.

Despite this insane state of affairs there is one sure way to the prevention of war: if every member of the " International Public ' was opposed, individually and collectively, to war and was determined in the event of a Government declaring war, to refuse to fight, to carry out an active programme of pacificism, there could be no war.

That way, it is true, is a dreamer's ideal at the moment but the education of the public in that direction is by no means an impossibility and it is here that the film shows its hand .

There is no medium which can reach every section of the International Public so readily and so comprehensively as the film. Many people read books, many listen to radios, many attend lectures but practically everyone goes to the cinemas. In England between 20 and 30 million people attend the cinemas *every week*. As the entire population of England is not much over 40 millions this gives some idea of the reach and power of the film.

Next the question arises: what is the best form for a film to take in propagating peace? As far as the masses are concerned the most effective argument for Peace is fear of war; not a sublimated " fear-of-war complex " comparable to the young Victorian woman's attitude towards sex, but a reasoned, knowledgeable fear, not only of war itself but fear of the aftermath and a knowledge of all that war means both to the individual and the community.

Also the propaganda has got to be convincing enough and sane enough to counteract the strong, sentimental influence of the patriots, the national fanaticism that is preached by mouth and by poster and that, like Hitlerism, overrides facts with words.

At the moment and in the past war films (i.e. ordinary features treating incidentally of war) have used symbolic photomontage in sequences depicting war scenes. This is not enough for Peace propaganda films; what is needed is scientific realism (cf. the parade of the wards showing the physical ravages of venereal diseases in " Damaged Lives "). Actual film-records of fighting in the Great War are lodged in the War Museums and these, well edited, would probably provide quite intelligent propaganda in themselves. Then there are such films as the short but very effective picture entitled " Peace—or War?" which recently enjoyed great success at a news theatre.

More films like this, with interesting personalities and with subjects treated in an interesting manner would, I feel be acceptable to the general public and would *ipso facto* achieve success at the Box Office.

In all propaganda films however the established maxim that it is necessary to teach without preaching is the first thing that the producers must observe. Although the tendency of this age is towards culture the mass of the adult populace rejects the idea of being taught and commercial films, while undoubtedly imparting knowledge (good and bad) hold this issue well back and place Box Office first. In the non-existance of didactic principles lies the success of the product and it is up to the producers of filmic propaganda to realise this and make their films accordingly.

Having considered the three paramount sections of films propagating Internatialism we cannot but come back to our original declaration that the most effective method is by the newsreel and the news theatre and it is a good sign that the latter sphere of entertainment, at the moment young, is gaining a definite hold.

The news theatre has the advantage over the reels of not having to pander to an exhibitor's prejudices—its audiences are very mixed and all that is necessary is that it keeps within the dictates of good taste.

"in the dictates of good taste"

B. V. B.

The policy of " in the dictates of good taste " has never been quite clear to me. If " good taste " suppresses the showing of a man being run over by a train (which it does)—well and good. But if it suppresses scenes of starving workers (which it does) or of a negro being lynched (which it does) —then " good taste " should be thrown to the wind and facts before it. How social reforms can ever be attained when nine tenths of the world are (or pretend to be) ignorant of the fact that men starve in streets, that innocent negroes are lynched, and that police fire on unarmed crowds, is certainly beyond my comprehension.

Our interest in films is judging them first and foremost as art, and then as to their relation to life itself. But the newsreel film is a different story. It is mere reporting of facts. Recording of reality. Reporting and not distorting. It requires technical skill, speed and efficiency, not a creative mind.

The modern news reel programme (e.g.: item 1. The Regiment inspected by Lady ——— 2. Target practice by the —— division of his majesty's fleet. 3. Test of new type of tank in ——— 4. New air bomber launched at ——— etcetera, etcetera) which consists of military and naval ballyhoo, seconded by titled persons making speeches and opening functions of little importance, is in itself subtle propaganda.

Like the Aldershot tattoo, the numerous inspections and demonstrations

of new war material is a wholesale glorification of war.

The newsreel's (one might almost say the cinema's) two greatest tasks are (1) the prevention of international war via the promotion of international understanding (see article by John Sydney) and (2) the putting before the public facts concerning the conditions under which those persons some call ' workers ' (other, more aptly, ' slaves of capitalism ') live.

Thus the newsreel, merely photographing reality, can show self-satisfied philistines that there are plenty of places in this world where men and women live in such poverty, such filth, such hell, and such slavery as to make one wonder why they yet desire existence.

In a pamphlet* written just before his death, Harry Alan Potamkin shows the film as the greatest social reformer and means to international understanding in existence. But he also shows the influence of the money-grubbing individuals who control the commercial cinema. Capitalism distorted, glorified and cloaked under a mass of superficial banalities. And he shows how those at the head of the American (and British) film industy at the time turned out their pseudo-patriotic war-glorifying opuses—" Over There ", " Beast of Berlin ", " My Flag ", " If you're a man—", " The Bugle Calls ", " For Liberty and God!" . . . . .

Film can aid the struggle for pacifism more than any other medium—owing to its widespread influence—and as I have said it can also show self-satisfied philistines that there are plenty of places in this world where men live in a state unfit for the lowest animal.

THIS IS THE NEWSREEL'S JOB.

To present the truth, and not a distorted version of reality.

* The Eyes of the Movie, International Publishers, 381 4th Avenue, New York. 25c.

on the set

ANDREW BUCHANAN

It is somewhat curious that despite perpetual efforts by the minority to remove the film from all other mediums of expression, and give it every opportunity to become a truly independent art form, the question of settings has been given comparatively little intelligent attention. Possibly, the idea of sets providing movement has not been regarded seriously, despite the hints which Nature gives us, in her waves and winds. Therefore, I am going to suggest that a set should be capable of giving movement to what would otherwise be a static sequence, and I also venture to prophesy that ultimately, the film will contain settings which could be presented *only* on the screen.

To elucidate this, may I categorise, very broadly, the types of settings employed today:—

Firstly, there are conventional studio interiors, representing the homes of ordinary people—settings which are solid and unimaginative, and necessarily so, whilst the film is devoted to portraying the visible side of everyday actualities. The vast majority of these interiors need no further comment, other than that they are adequate for a purpose which is inadequate.

Secondly, the exaggerated settings which musical extravaganzas have thrust upon us—enormous shimmering palaces, studded with gold diggers—endless bathing pools—revolving columns coated with mirrors, glittering staircases up which myriads of sparkling supers climb for ever, though the summit is far from heaven, and crystal floors upon which more groups form themselves into bewildering examples of haughty culture! Such settings certainly possess imagination, but it is the offspring of the showman who, in his intense desire to lay suitable sacrifices on the box office altar, loses sight of the medium he is supplying. Consequently, however imaginative and spectacular these settings may be, they are really as solid as the wall papered interiors of the fictional screen play, and movement is introduced solely by the combined efforts of the cast, the camera and the cutter—the vital trio upon which filmic movement, or pictorial rhythm is absolutely dependent today.

Thirdly, there are the, shall I say, Caligaristic settings, perfect examples of imaginative designing, together with scenes such as those in the Fall of the House of Usher, which gave us lovely moments of flowing draperies and shadows. Nevertheless, the settings in Caligari, fantastic and original to a degree were, after all, solid—and even of the stage.

Fourthly, there are the symbolic settings which I have originated in documentary production, which frame ballet, music, sculpture, craftsmen at work, and countless other non-fictional sequences. Each set is designed to form an integral part of the subject without, of course, distracting the attention from what is going on. Harps are grouped in avenues of giant strings—hats created before an angular set composed of a diagonal design forming a hat and face, the nose being a triangular door, etc., etc. I have experimented for years

with every kind of subject—sometimes using plain curtains, at others, devising sets which build up subjects that would otherwise be too weak to present on the screen, and I have learnt that the value of symbolic scenes is infinitely greater than most producers imagine. Naturally, in dealing with non-fictional characters, I have had the advantage over producers handling stories set in everyday surroundings, who cannot permit the imaginative designer to transform the drawing room in Bella Vista into an apartment symbolising the mental activities of the inmates, firstly because they have no mental activities, and secondly because the story is portraying normal events in a terribly normal locality.

And now I will come to the point by looking into the kind of future which I hope will ultimately arrive. When it comes, films will contain settings that contribute largely to the movement of the production. They will be settings that flow across the screen—perhaps composed of shadows, or of smoke contained in glass panels, upon which symbolic shapes are forever moving, though the players may be stationary. Thereby, journeys will be made across the earth by characters which remain on the screen, whilst the backgrounds change. This should not be confused with current methods of mechanical back projection in any of its forms. The varying speeds at which the backgrounds would move would symbolise the emotional state of the characters, and create pictorial rhythm so far unexploited. Naturally, there are few, if any films yet produced which would lend themselves to this treatment, nor should one expect to find any whilst the producer concentrates upon subjects which are suitable only for stage presentation, but in developing the idea, we shall be aiding the film of the future by forcing it further and further away from the other mediums, and compel it to deal with the supremely important and fascinating side of life that is felt and not seen. That is surely the function of the film, and it demands settings which the stage could never present—settings that flow.

esign for a set . . . simplicity is always most effective. rom an Andrew Buchanan 'short'.

ojet de Mise en scène . . . la simplicité est toujours plus suggestive. Tiré d'un "short" de A. Buchanan.

eichnung für einen Hintergrund. Einfachheit ist immer n Wirkungs-vollsten. Von A. Buchanan's kurzem Film.

" Jazz-Comedy "! Alexandrov's film, fully reviewed in this number.

" Comedie-Jazz "! un film Alexandrov, dont on trouve un abondant compterendu dans ce numéro.

" Jazz-Comedy "! von Alexandrov, in dieser Nummer kritisch behandelt.

beautiful type from " Suburbia ", Boris Barnet's epic film. Will we ever see in London?

n très beau type tiré de " Banlieue ", le film épique de Boris Barnet. errons-nous jamais ce film à Londres?

in schöner Typus aus " Vorortsleben ", Boris Barnet's epischem Film.

RENE CLAIR
director of " Le Tour ", " Sous les Toits de Paris ", " Le Million ", " 14 Juillet ", " A nous la Liberté ", and the new " Le Dernier Milliardair "

the g.p.o. film unit

Criticism to-day is such a jumbled mess—too much of the personal opinion, and not what criticisms is: the judging of a work by a given and accepted standard. Bad work is hopelessly over-praised, good under. Occassionally good work is overpraised.

The latter is the case with g.p.o. film unit films. (What the learned professors governing the g.p.o. can think of some of the films one can but wonder: "what's that there for?", "what's the idea of all these short scenes?").

Some of the best directors in England are, or were, with the g.p.o. film unit. Arthur Elton, John Grierson, Basil Wright, etc.

Some weeks ago when thinking of this article a proposed heading read "A unit in England making great films". After seeing several of their films (though how much mutilated by commercial companies?) the heading changed to "England's decadent film unit". Both were bad, especially the latter.

Actually the g.p.o. has done some good work, probably better than the total output of all the English and American companies put together. But, and this is our only real point, every film they make is not necessarily a masterpiece, is not necessarily good, and is sometimes very bad. John Grierson, the head director of the unit, can be relied upon. His *Drifters* was never over-praised, though often misunderstood. In some ways it is more a filmpoem than a document. Basil Wright's work is good in general, and we have yet to see whether it will become really first-rate. Arthur Elton has probably the most knowledge of film art, with the possible exception of Grierson, of anyone in the group. His aeroplane-starting sequence in *Aero-Engine* will long be remembered. As an example of montage and photographic beauty it is one of the finest pieces of cinema which has yet come from England. In his films everything assumes dramatic importance; a vital fundamental in any art. While Elton seems to aim more at the dynamic, Basil Wright creates (in for example *Windmill in Barbadoes* and *Liner Cruising South*) a calm lyrical feeling—his films at their very best are visual poems.

Of the other members of the staff Stuart Legg may do good work. Quite enthusiastic reports of *Telephone Workers* have been heard. His *New Generation* was, however, an uninspired, competent but dull affair. Probably the g.p.o. unit suffer, though far less than anyone else, from lack of freedom. Freedom in choosing their subjects and, much more important, freedom in their treatment of the subjects. Of course if everything was in Grierson's control, film directors would be in seventh heaven. He insists on the director as a director and not as a politician. That method, the only one, has stood ever since he first turned celluloid. It is one of his many admired qualities.

It is a pity the g.p.o. must film g.p.o. subjects. Though these embrace

many, they are all of a too similar nature.

When their films are shown publicly the ordinary press writers remain dormant (" anyhow who wants to review a film which only lasts half an hour). The attention they get is from film societies and other intelligent audiences. Here—a strange convention. No attention is paid to the film proper—nothing really matters other than the fact that its a g.p.o. film—therefore accepted with no fuss as very nearly perfect.

B. V. B.

●

fritz arno wagner interviewed

by JOHN C. MOORE

Fritz Arno Wagner and the histroy of the film are synonymous. His name means fourteen years of creative cinema. His career stretches from Arthur Robison's *Warning Shadows* to Gustav Ucicky's *Fugitives*. He has seen great directors come and go. With von Gerlach he made *The Chronicles of Grieshus* but who remembers von Gerlach to-day, the director who made *Vanina,* starring the greatest film partnership of all times: Asta Nielsen and Paul Wegener. He has outlived Fred Murnau, under whose direction he made *Dracula* as far back as 1922. This film was elementary in its realisation, but it stood out by the fine photography of F. A. Wagner. The same can be said of Karl Grüne's melodramatic *At the Edge of the World* and *Marquis d'Eon*. We remember them chiefly by the artistry of the cameraman.

Georgi Pabst has claimed Wagner's assistance on many occasions, notably *The Love of Jeanne Ney, Die Dreigroschenoper* and *Kameradschaft,* that epic of the mines, and his name is closely linked with the career of the phantast Lang, the camerawork of *Der Müde Tod* (Destiny), *Dr. Mabuse, Spione* and *" M "* being in his capable hands. How primitive—compared with our standards of to-day—was Lang's *Destiny* (1921), how poor its material and cheap its symbols; yet its theme was far in advance of the times. It stood out by the performance of an unknown actor Bernard Goetzke (never repeated) and the clever trick photography of Wagner.

Like many well known figures in the film world Fritz Arno Wagner has led a life of adventure. Born on 5th December 1889 in Schmiedefeld (Thuringia) he commenced his career as a secretary and later became a reporter on Leslie's Weekly, New York. The revolution between Huerta and Villa saw him in Mexico, but in 1914 he was back in his native country to take part in the world war. Via the kinematographic section of the German General Staff he went over to the films in 1920 and became a cameraman.

It is always interesting to hear the views of an expert like F. A. Wagner on his profession. Let me quote his own words:—

> " When one is gripped by a film representation, it is only too easy to forget that the film is a pictorial art and the cameraman, one of the creators of the picture, is often overlooked. Yet it is none the less true that his work, without realising it, may well be the most artistic part of a film. In some cases the good impression created by a mediocre film is due almost entirely to a good cameraman.

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world cinema

REVIEW • CATEGORY •

france · germany
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IRENE NICHOLSON
BVB ETC

film review

october by S. M. Eisenstein and G. Alexandrov

Eisenstein, working in material that is heavy with dirt and politics can yet keep the photographic as elastic as the cartoon film. Absolute space is never established so firmly that the next cut cannot sweep it away. Thus symbols are intrinsic, not imposed, and make Pudovkin's "birth and regeneration" sequence, his traffic fantasy in *Deserter* seem but patches of flimsiness on a rough material. Eisenstein weaves the incidents of the revolution into, not over, the old Petersburg of architectural splendour, pomp and statuary. Metaphors are complete from picture to picture, not partial, literary similes.

The solid mass of reality imposes no greater restraint than the restless outline of a cartoon, only the satire is twisted from fun to cruelty, and eventually turns against itself. The Bolsheviks merely invert the waste and oppression they would abolish.The shooting down of the revolutionaries, the raising of the bridges, the dead woman's hair and the mangled horse have an authentic bitterness. But when the Bolsheviks attack there is immediately conflict between what Eisenstein should and what he must have felt. Result —several reels of boredom and an eventual compromise which, in spite of magnified titles and waving flags, cannot gloss over the futility of destruction, a futility which one vandal at least seems to sense while pricking a feather pillow.

The first five reels contain almost everything in the film that is important outside the Soviet. Details, the lolling head of the statue, machinery seeming to pound down upon the man in the trenches, the hair on the bridge, individualise the impersonal. Pudovkin would have worked the other way about, gaining for a moment in intimacy but losing in retrospect when the characters are discovered as types too sharply defined. (Eisenstein himself in *The General Line* created no personality but a Sunday School prig.) Film cannot isolate the human. All nature is brought on to a single plane and moves with equal power of expression. Individualisation can best be reached by diffusion of interest over the inanimate. Eisenstein thus makes intimate the revolution which Pudovkin can only characterise. Pudovkin's characters once labelled (by the broad effect of appearance and action) are developed in montage no more subtly than the prevailing speed of the action requires. So the cut is anticipated at a particular moment in time, but seldom, as in Eisenstein, does it join the image itself with the shock of the inevitable. Occasional cuts in *October* (e.g. the peacock and the door), while yet imposing

the polygonal vision peculiar to film, are so fluid as to appear continuous. Parts are not imposed on one another but unite much as the cut does chemically unite. Eisenstein is more essentially of the film than Pudovkin. Only the largeness of their common subject matter possibly demands Pudovkin's less comprehensive approach.

I. N.

emperor jones by Dudley Murphy · United Artists production

Niggers have bodies born for light to play on, and the photographer takes the honours. But the nigger's naif and primitive rhythm is smothered by their own striving after western manners (like women who desire to be equal and can only imitate). This is hardly criticism of the artistic endeavour, but the film is negligible except in two moments: the opening, where religion is close to its source in imaginative fear and mundane rhythms: and when Robeson breaks stones, swinging his body and singing. For that, in spite of blows and shackles, is a freer occupation for a giant than blacking boots or shooting crapps. The film is a tragedy in spite of itself in the triumph of cosmopolitan civilisation over indigenous culture, and not because of itself in the pantings of a dying scoundrel. The last few feet are a display of what should have been primitive imagination but which becomes, with the aid of a blue tint, filters and superimposition, technical rubbish.

I. N.

romance sentimentale by Eisenstein and Alexandrov

One sequence of Eisenstein's *Romance Sentimentale,* a swift and delicate storm, has recently come to London prefixed to some yards of banal pathetic fallacy in which a woman sings. The storm, all of Eisenstein's film that I have seen, seems to be the concept of a moment which labour would altogether have broken. Its freshness is more like a water colour sketched in a few moments, than like film, which Eisenstein himself describes as "heavy artillery". Film, whose final process is scientific, need show no marks of discarded ideas; but thought developed over the months taken to its making is apt to be powerful rather than immediate. In this it is like the art of words, which can be worked as paint cannot, but which, if freshness is the important quality, it is often better not to retouch. The storm sequence is unique in film because of this apparently direct contact with its subject, and together with *October* or *Potemkin* it shows the range of Eisenstein's ability.

Film has two distinct lines of attack, pictorial and rythmic. It can split up melody and harmony into musically simultaneous contrast; so that the ethereal frostiness of Tissé's photography is saved from mere prettiness by the swift movement of camera and celluloid. There is in all water potentially both storm and calm, so that when the change comes the same movement can continue from normal to slow motion. The element changes its mood, not its nature, and the film closes on a quite level which was underlying throughout. Trees, which are strong even when they are not crashing to the ground or blown by wind, appear quieter in the slightly quivering

reflection of water than in their own immobility. The two images which have been parallel throughout, are thus made to unite at their calmest. The subtle imagery of the storm is ruined by the blatant sentimentalism of the film to which it has been attached. And its full meaning is probably not discoverable in this abbreviated version.

Even so, delicacy, strengthened by northern thrust unites eastern and western art as only Russians, in their geographical and racial half-way house, are capable of doing. That it can be considered thus nationally and not politically shows it more generally valuable than Eisenstein's other films. Comparatively it is slight in stature, but it is self-contained, with no exterior values which will be lost to succeeding generations.

I. N.

man of aran by Robert Flaherty · Gainsborough production

Picturesqueness rather than realism is in documentary a serious fault, and one which Flaherty's peasant idealism can hardly avoid. He is the most honest of directors; yet everything is beautiful in Aran, hardships are bravely endured and invariably overcome, the peasants are noble and rear model children. All this is not a sop for the public but for Flaherty himself; and therefore we must be grateful for one film of integrity, and only sorry that the director has not a vision broad enough to include a little dirt with the beauty. Documentary betrays its purpose if it distorts.

The photography is very clear and clean, and a few cuts (rolling sea continuing to a pan along a cottage wall) are well timed. But Flaherty is too entirely concerned with types to worry much about artistic effect. The incidents develop slowly and there is little cohesion between them. Quick cutting comes in self consciously and obviously.

Bad dubbing nearly ruins the natural movements of natural actors. Gesture is more artificial than movement that does not imply words. To be convincing it requires special training; and when the word and the movement are produced separately it is almost bound to be ridiculous.

In spite of its very obvious faults, the film is of importance in the year's events because it is free of the studios, concedes nothing to convention, and breaks new geographic ground.

I. N.

jazz-comedy by G. Alexandrov · photography by Vladimir Nielson

The film world of Moscow has been bombshelled by the new picture *Jazz Comedy* and it is little wonder, so unexpected is this first Soviet musical comedy.

Hitherto the name of the regisseur, Grisha Alexandrov has been associated with that of Eisenstein as part director of *The General Line, October* and *Thunder Over Mexico*. By himself he has made two short films, one, a documentary was interesting only because of his experiments in transparency.

From *Jazz Comedy* it is clear that when Alexandrov went to Hollywood with Eisenstein he learnt every trick employed in that Mecca of commercialists for the making of " box-office " pictures. But the Hollywood manner, tough as it is, when transplanted to Moscow became transformed into something uniquely different,—a new Soviet manner.

The film opens with a panorama of 450 feet, one of the longest ever shot. A flock of sheep, goats and cattle, Mary the Buffalo, Carmen the Cow with a Flower in her Mouth, Comrade Secretary Goat are threading their way merrily up to the Caucasian hills on a bright spring morning in charge of a dancing shepherd, (played by Otiosov, the composer) who beats a tune out of the railings and bridges with his stick in the best cartoon manner.

Otiosov is being taught to play the violin by a professor staying in a nearby sanatorium. One day he plays there at a concert and a waitress who dreams of becoming a singer falls in love with him; he of course takes no notice of her and falls instead for a " Torgsin baby " (the Soviet version of a blonde bombshell). During the concert his flock investigate the dormitories and eat everything.

After many adventures, Otiosov finds himself in Moscow conducting or preparing for his debut at the Bolshio Theatre with the Musical Collective Friendship. (In reality there are more than fifty jazz bands in the Soviet Union). The collective are living in a students house full of noise; their practice is for ever being disturbed, driven wild they indulge in a little free fighting. This sequence, which is as funny as any conceived for the screen has the character of the synchronized acrobatic cartoon adapted by human actors from Walt Disney.

In the end of course Otiosov meets the waitress again, now an actress and all ends happily ever after.

Such pictures are mass-produced in Hollywood, but minus any spark of imaginative life simply because they are turned out mechanically without the understanding that musical comedy can be not only creative cinema, but also embody the spirit of human sincerity and the antics of real people.

Alexandrov, against the opinions of the older regisseurs believed that this featherweight romance was as potential material for Soviet audiences as the Raising of the Bridges in *October* or the Milk Separator in *The General Line*. For this reason he has turned out the most joyous commentary on Soviet life.

When this film is not as perfect in execution as in feeling only the newness of the medium is to be blamed; for instance the song recording which was shot separately and projected into the studio for the shooting of the image, that is difficult work for technicians still in the experimental stages of sound recording. But the whole indicates that there are all manner of ideas forming in the Soviet studios, a pleasant discovery after the somewhat conventional films Maschrapom and Souyeskino turned out last year.

M. S.

charlemagne by Pierre Colombier

What the story of Charlemagne means to say is perfect—but the way it says it is far from so.

In simpler words *Charlemagne* is very bad cinema—its cutting is hopelessly slow, its photography just anyhow—but the attempted significance behind the slow images, coupled with the brilliant acting of Raimu and the general competence of the other members of the cast, is one of subtle and ironical satire, A satire on capitalism and the Fascist ideal of flagwaving and ballyhoo dictatorship. I repeat that, cinematically *Charlemagne* is useless —almost the whole thing could have been transplanted onto a theatre-stage with no alteration; it is, in fact, three-quarters dialogue and one quarter just

film reviews continued

mediocre cinema. But the brilliant satire of the whole does to a certain degree make up for this, and makes it well worth seeing. The trouble with this, and in fact most, satirical work is that being mingled with comedy, people are content to laugh and leave the significance of what they are laughing at to carry on just as it was before being shown up.

B. V. B.

rapt (captured) by D. Kirsanoff · photography by Victor Gluck with Dita Parlo · Vital, etc.

Here are
lovely photographic angles,
brilliant cuts,
counterpoint sounds,
beautiful photography,
and so on—generally

used in the wrong place or just superfluously. Kirsanoff made, of course, *Brumes D'Automne* (lovely idea, badly carried out).

Now he makes *Rapt.*

His shimmering trees and sunsets and massive clouds and raging storms point to his love of portraying emotionism symbolically.

There are close-ups that thrill—in crystal beauty and intensity—and there is sentimental acting and a melodramatic ending and ridiculous wipes and dissolves which spoil any good work.

But *Rapt* does not lack good material.

The actors and types are interesting, but not so their acting—in particular Dita Parlo never succeeds in looking a peasant.

Rapt is pictorial beauty, badly assembled, not always well acted, but it is the director's film. KIRSANOFF is written over every sequence.

However bad the result, it is stamped with the individuality of its creator. A vital and praiseworthy factor.

B. V. B.

the mystery of sex Sacha production

Produced at the Sacha studios in Vienna and shown there in April 1933, the MYSTERY OF SEX went on the Grand Tour without success. Country after country shut its doors to the film. France, whose censor normally only concerns himself with political films, banned it. In fact Republican Spain is the only place outside Vienna where the film has had a showing; or ever a hearing, for the Press of most countries refused to print a word about it.

In spite of the fact that the scientific parts of this film are hung together with a sugary continuity of normal love interest, in spite of the fact that those scientific scenes are quite nauseating and in spite of the fact that the greater part of the film deals with one of the worlds sorest problems, duel sexuality; it would be extremely foolish to condemn THE MYSTERY OF SEX.

Five great research workers, Voronoff of Paris, Theilhaber of Munich, Peham of Vienna, Abraham of Berlin and Chiavacci co-operated to make this absolutely unique record of various experimental operations, open to the entire world. Actual operations were shot in the theatres of the famous Viennese clinics, and some of the chirurgical technique must be of immense value to surgeons the world over . . . But: How can the general public

benefit by this film? That is a question which presents itself and which I cannot possibly answer. During every presentation of the MYSTERY OF SEX, strong persons have to be taken out of the cinemas of Barcelona and Madrid where the film has been running. And let it be noted that Spaniards are perhaps the least sensitive of all civilised peoples. They can enjoy the destructive slaughter of bull fighting, but these constructive manœuvres of the surgeon's knife are too much for them!

THE MYSTERY OF SEX is the trump card in favour of censorship. Let England thank God that its strict censor has a reputation abroad. THE MYSTERY OF SEX will never reach your pleasant shores.

HAROLD LOWENSTEIN.

lot in sodom by J. S. Watson and Melville Webber

One cannot quarrel with the beauty of this result. Certainly *Lot* is a lovely work of art and deserves to be seen many times. But by any worthwhile standard it is a chaos of conflicting mediums. Nothing is thought out in terms of any one, but the directors, like a painter with his colours, dip by turn into each, following the turn of the story. As a consequence, there is neither the conditioned visual value of the German film, nor the free thematic development of the ideal film-poem or absolute-abstract film, approached by Richter and Germaine Dulac. Yet—so little do we know about formal cinema—it requires a distinct effort to discover this failing. We do not instinctively note the conflict of methods, and we see only the beauty conveyed by each, which we are quite able to harmonize into a pleasing whole. We do not miss the unity or development of light values: we are scarcely conscious that out of these an intelligible theme could be built, and we are satisfied with a mere homogeneity that we call avant-garde. We do not realize that our film is nothing but a crazy-quilt of unexplored ideas.

One of the greatest tasks of the cinemist of the future, on celluloid and on paper, will be, if the future grants us the creative energy, to recognize the many diverse patterns in this and other films, and to follow up their infinite possibilities. Only when the characteristics and scope of a given type are understood, will it be possible for anyone to express in it a true cinematic idea. Hitherto, experiment has sometimes been happier than *Lot,* but it has seldom if ever had any better conception, beyond the vaguest generalities, of the nature or purpose of formal film aesthetic. To identify Eggeling's abstraction and Deslav's absolutism and base them on the train of Vincennes is the merest preliminary. It still leaves completely unanswered the problem of filmic *meaning*—unless we are prepared to assert that our *Symphonie Diagonales* are master works of art. If not, we must admit that we have not yet had a single film, long or short, that is *valid qua formal cinema.* We have only illustrated other arts. Formal cinema, to a far greater extent than film-drama or montage, is in its infancy. Whether or not we can later compose individual monuments that will endure, we must first know what our means are and what they can say in their own right. It is upon this that the entire life and justification of the visual, the Right wing of film art depends.

Kirk Bond.

When do we see this film in England?—Ed.

film reviews continued

Synchronization Planned by JOSEPH SCHILLINGER. Photographed by LEWIS JACOBS.

An attempt to follow rhythms (visual and auditory) and to establish their mathematical basis. Both Schillinger and Jacobs are now working with several dance groups preparing to film arrangements from mathematical formula prescribed for dancers in space and time. The results will be photographed in slow motion, the better to analyze the constructions.

Oramunde, Directed and written by Emlen Étting.

" A film poem " which was awarded the first prize in a competition of films organized by the visual instruction committee of the Women's Arts and Industries.

Lewis Jacobs.

film category

LA ROUBE ROUGE—excellent acting as in most French films—but why this everlasting filming of plays theatrically instead of cinematically—dialogue instead of pictures—no form, no cinema.

BOLERO—this is definitely above the average—there is some excellent camerawork—two of the dances including the sensuous ' Bolero ' are filmed—note the overlap montage in the fan dance—and the camera panning is faultless.

LADY OF THE BOULEVARDS—poor Anna Sten, and after her good work in that magnificent piece of cinema, Ozep's *Murder of Karamazov*—now she is a glorified prostitute in a boring story presented as a talking picture.

CRAINQUEBILLE—see LA ROUBE ROUGE (above).

COUNTESS OF MONTE CRISTO—where the Countess jams her foot on the accelerator of the studio car and races through the studio, past the bawling director—away—into freedom, might be symbolical of so many things in this world where human beings are slaves to a capitalist machine—at any rate it remains quite a nice piece of cinema in a film that isn't.

THE BATTLE—begins quite nicely and one starts to think that Nicholas Farkas knows almost as much about film directing as camerawork—but after that the less said the better—' honour and your country ' dominates atrocious (or non-existent) cutting and acting—Merle Oberon in paricular is sick-making.

LADY KILLER—this doesn't pretend to be anything other than a vehicle for a Mr. James Cagney who seems to know his stuff—unfortunately the director doesn't—but the cutting in the monkey sequence proves our so-often-stated point—this little piece of cinema is water in a desert—in this case a large desert.

ANDREW BUCHANAN'S CINEMAGAZINES—lovely photography, compositions, and cutting that means something—in each one sequence stands out—Andrew Buchanan is an artist, his work is miles above any other shown regularly at cinemas.

IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT (inspired title!)—just 50 feet, in the newspaper sequence, of lovely cinema—cross rhythms and patterns, quick-cutting, with headlines superimposed overall—but for these few feet there are about

6000 of messrs. Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert doing their tiresome stuff.

JACK AHOY—there is so much movement that the film is very nearly excellent cinema—and it has a moral to teach—that " filmicness " pays—the verbal gags are good, but anyone who has seen Jack Hulbert on the stage knows how much better they might have been—only watch for the bits that are purely film—and listen to the laughter then.

MORGENROT—a not too blatent glorification of submarine warfare—but a glorification nevertheless—as film it is just talk plus picture—the photography when the submarine submerges is interesting.

FILM acting—SYLIA SIDNEY'S eye movements, she has a wonderful control of her face, particularly noticeable in JENNY GERHADT and less so, in GOOD GIRL.

W. C. FIELDS—relies rather on dialogue, but certainly not entirely so—some of his broad comedy is excellent.

international notes

france

It must be admitted that the accusations of the famous French film critics, Jean Pascal in the " Information Cinématographique " and René Jeanne in the " Revue des Deux Mondes ", that the French cinema is too strongly influenced by the theatre, are not unfounded. France, above all other countries, has suffered from a surfeit of filmed stage plays. That some of these films are above the average is entirely due to the splendid work of the actors, the director, the cameraman and all technicians concerned. As a typical example I would cite the Cipar-Filmex production " Cette Vieille Canaille " after the stage play of Fernand Nozière. This film is chiefly interesting for the direction of Anatole Litvak and the montage of the Dutchman Han Rust, whose work has already attracted our attention in Pabst's " Dreigroschenoper ". The opening sequence of this film with it characteristic French fair is excellent, and the acting throughout, especially that of Harry Baur, is faultless. " Cette Vieille Canaille " is typical of the present state of the French cinema.

The most active studios are certainly those of Pathé-Natan at Joinville and Rue Francoeur. At the time of writing they have just released a trilogy (the three parts variously entitled " Une Tempète sous un Crâne ", " Les Thenardier " and " Liberté . . . Liberté Chérie ") of the world-famous novel " Les Misérables " by Victor Hugo. At present this film is being shown with great success at three cinemas simultanously: The Moulin Rouge, Marivaux and the Théâtre Marignan. The direction is in the capable hands of Raymond Bernard, who had at his disposal one of the finest casts ever assembled, headed by Harry Baur (who also played in " Cette Vieille Canaille ") Max Dearly, Charles Vanel, Josseline Gaêl and Jean Servais. " Les Misérables was shown with great success in Brussels under Royal Patronage, a few days before King Albert met his death.

René Clair, who under contract with Pathé-Natan, has just completed the interiors of his latest film " Le Dernier Milliardair " at Joinville and has left for Cap d'Antibes to shoot the open air scenes. This film promises to be a success of originality and technique. René Clair informs me that he is

very satisfied with the progress he has made at Antibes, St. Raphael and St. Augulf, despite the bad weather which retarded the completion of his work by about ten days.

Moscow—Berlin—Paris!

It is a long road that Fjodor Otzep has travelled since he left the U.S.S.R. many years ago now. For Mejrabpom Russ he made Count Alexei Tolstoy's "Living Corpse" in which Pudovkin played the part of Fedya Protasov; for Terra he directed "The Murder of Dimitri Karamazov" based on Dostoievski, and now, for Pathé-Natan, he is filming "Amok" after the famous story of tropical life by Stephan Zweig. The cast includes Marcelle Chantal and Jean Yonnel, the well-known member of the Comédie Française.

"Sapho", the famous novel by Alphonse Daudet which has been filmed once again, this time under the direction of Léonce Perret, will shortly be shown publicly in Paris. "Tartarin de Tarascon", by the same author, is also being produced just now. At the time of writing they are shooting the famous lion scenes at Milianah and Bou-Saada in Arabia.

Amsterdam:

Once again Joris Ivens has left Holland for Moscow, this time via Paris, where, with André Malraux he co-operated in the manuscript of the latter's book "La Condition Humaine" which was awarded the literary Prix Goncourt this year. He will submit this manuscript to the Mejrabpom Russ Film Co. in Moscow, whom he is visiting at their request to discuss plans for a new film.

After "Komsomol" Ivens completed his documentary sound film "Nieuwe Gronden" (New Earth) dealing with the gigantic work of draining the Zuiderzee and the new economic and social conditions that arose there. The musical score—like "Komsomol"—is by Hans Eisler, who also illustrated "Kühle Wampe". "New Earth" received its première at the Cinéma des Champs Elysées in Paris before a distinguished audience, including the Dutch Consul General.

At the end of last year, in collaboration with Henri Storck, Joris Ivens made an enquête-film of the life of the miners in the Belgian coal area "The Borinage". At present this film is being shown with great success in Holland and Belgium.

Mr. M. H. K. Franken, whose film of salvage work on the Dutch coast we discussed in our first number, has recently completed his child-study "Jan-Pieter" and Hans Sluizer has just made his first "avant-garde" film, a psycho-analytic study "Puberté".

Berlin:

One of the most successful UFA productions recently released is "Gold", which is built up on the formulae of "Metropolis". It is a further attempt to combine science with sensation, but too clearly made with an eye on the box office. The photography, as in most German films, is of a high standard, while the acting of Brigitte Helm and Hans Albers is competent.

JOHN C. MOORE.

Creating characters without people . . . two studies by Francis Bruguiere.
Créer des figures caractéristiques sans acteurs . . . deux études de Francis Bruguiere.
Charaktere ohne Schauspieler zu bilden . . . zwei Studien von Francis Bruguière.

from " few are chosen " by Francis Bruguiere and Oswell Blakeston

Andrew Buchanan, one of England's few worthwhile directors. He writes in this number.
Andrew Buchanan, l'un des quelques metteurs en scène de valeur anglais, dont nous publions un article.

Creating characters without people . . . two studies by Francis Bruguiere.

Créer des figures caractéristiques sans acteurs . . . deux études de Francis Bruguiere.

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from " few are chosen " by Francis Bruguiere and Oswell Blakeston

cinema of spain

It would please Leonard Hacker's heart beyond all measure to see MADRID, an interest short, which has just been completed here. If *Maja,* Marquesa de Alba, had only loved her husband a little more, I would have nothing to write about, but happily fidelity is not a Spanish virtue. Goya's world famous painting of her in the nude, adorns those Spanish stamps which caused such excitement in Washington recently. No wonder the maestro received such a severe shock when the Marquesa asked to see his work of art. He sat up all night labouring on another *Maja,* invested, this time.

The two masterpieces are to be seen at the Prada, and their images in the film MADRID. The story is put over with considerable humour and simplicity. There is a lap-dissolve from the clothed Marquesa to the nude. Taking into consideration that both pictures were shot at one frame one turn, the brilliance of the camera work (which makes them melt into one another) cannot be overlooked. Credit is due to Goldberger. The rest of the film is of no interest: a series of beautiful pictures, superb photographically, are thrown together without feeling or form.

Of film production, there is little to be said, of film art, nothing. Some two score sound films " 1902 technique " have been turned in the half dozen Spanish studios. Alfonso's abdication appears not to have released a torrent of revolutionary celluloid. The screens are lit with conventional commercial fare. In Madrid they are handsomely housed, cinema architecture being most advanced. The only annoying factor being that sound is generally distorted. But why should that worry the populace. Their photo- and phonoplays are all enacted in some barbarous and unintelligible language such as English, French, American or German.

But that is typically Spanish. Beautiful projection, and appalling sound reproduction. This is a land of *contrasts*. Spain is objectively glamourous, but subjectively crude—medieval. Madrid has a finger in the future, but the rest of its body in the past. I wrote a short script with this idea underlying it, for 16 mm. production, But the Tempo of life is so slow, and of raw stock, so fast!

H. L.

notes from america

Each season is marked by the stereotyped impression of some half dozen personalities and this season is no exception. We have already had our quota: one " new " Garbo film, one " new " Dietrich film, one " new " Chevalier film, one " new " Marx Bros. film, one " new " Mae West film, one " new " Eddie Cantor film, one " new " Lubitsch film, Vidor film, Clarence Brown film, etc. and many more than one " new " musical film. There is nothing more to look forward too. We could have anticipated this season with memories of our favourite films of the past year . . . .

Roman Scandals, purporting to be comedy, makes use of the same tendency to the sadism of de Mille's *Sign of the Cross*. Yet its martyred Christian maidens with tresses down to here (the censors, you know!) fool no one. I thought the auction block scene amusing and the chariot race decidedly inferior to the mad chariot in the Marx Bros. *Horsefeathers*. The attempted " social " angle, commenting on landlordism and the possibility of graft (hush!) in politics is distasteful because it is patronizingly shown.

Dancing Lady with the ubiquitous Joan Crawford toyed around for a few interesting moments with some fetching photography of a super-ballet sequence utilizing a carousell in semi-silhouette and flying heads and arms

american notes continued

of girls . . . capturing a degree of physical beauty . . . and Ted Healy's stooges were good as usual. I must balk at *Flying Down to Rio*. Poverty of imagination has never manifested itself more strikingly. Imagine a chorus of Hollywood cuties decked out in practically nothing at all, mounted on the wings of a squadron of planes, doing their one-two-three in the clouds while the music from the Buenos Aires Hotel Orchestra accompanies them. Surely this is the height of something and I don't mean to pun.

Pudovkin's *Deserter* reached America, was looked at by Amkino, and promptly sent back to Moscow. Its theme of unemployment would not ever pass censorship, so we shall miss seeing this film of which so much was to be expected. Room's *Bed and Sofa* also went back to Moscow—censor trouble too. A new Soviet film, *Torn Shoes,* reaching high artistic levels, is due soon. The cast is entirely composed of youngsters under 13 years. *Life is Beautiful,* the Pudovkin silent film with the loveliest nature photography I have ever seen, is relegated to cinematic limbo because of its slow pace. Cocteau's *" Sang d'Un Poete "* stirred up mild interest in New York, but good French films, except for *Poil de Carotte* and the Rene Clair films, have been conspicuous by their absence.

The accompanying music score by Louis Siegel for *Lot in Sodom* is highly individual and stems from *Le Sacre,* Satie and Debussy. Ancient Greek and Dorian modes are employed with uncanny effect by the flute whistling its half-melancholy leering and grotesque whinings as the sodomites gyrate thru their perverted dances. Thru vast distances of space (suggesting Murnau's *Faust* at the opening of the film disclosing the city of Sodom seen from the clouds) is heard ancient primeaval chanting and then the soliloquy of Lot's wife against this chanting in contrapuntal effect. The muted violin played *sul punticello* in minor thirds at the first introduction of *Lot* is intensely Hebraic, almost cabbalic, I should say . . . Sometimes the music grates, cackles and jars, crashes down in fury and rises to ecstasy during the childbirth episode—MULLIER TEMPLUM EST—" Woman is a Temple "—I think the score is lovely imaginative music, profoundly felt, an integral part of the film, the whole being an absolute creation. The censors insisted on cutting some twenty or thirty feet of lovely photography of Lot's daughter in her travail simply because she was unclothed . . . But between Granowsky and Watson we realize what cinema can do now to idealize motherhood in mingling ecstasy with despair, distraught with its own loveliness, triumphing over ignorance and superstition to something clear, noble and eminently worth while—since so many of us have begun to ask ourselves if anything, after all, was really worth the trouble it would take to achieve it . . .

I have purposely kept mention of *Dawn to Dawn* for the last. Perhaps it will help to impress. That is my intention. An experimental film by Cameron Macpherson from a continuity by Seymour Stern, directed by Josef Berne with original music by Macpherson himself (there's an oddity for you—a producer who does his own musical scores—other directors please notice!)—*Dawn to Dawn* (originally called *Black Dawn*) is a maturely conceived, sensitively directed sound film that sets out boldly into new paths. With an almost spartan use of dialogue, which comes crisp and impregnated (so much dialogue is so sterile), Macpherson and Berne tell the story of a girl, forced to serve as a drudge on the farm of her sick

father. The father has kept her from all contact with the outside world—and other men—with the last embers of jealousy dying out in his wasted body. A youth comes over the hills and the girl is transfigured for a brief night thru the presence of this stranger in their house. In the next dawn she sends him away when her father collapses from anger at the thought of this man coming between father and daughter. She does not know her father is dead as she watches the stranger, and her future happiness, disappear over the horizon. Black Dawn.

It is of such simple material that *Dawn to Dawn* is made. Utilizing the short story technique— it seems almost to have come from the pen of a Faulkner or an Erskine Caldwell. The continuity by Stern is a smoothly flowing structure on which Josef Berne has grafted a stream of image-strengthened light. Photography and music are both lyric in quality. Julia Hayden as the girl has great promise. Set *Dawn to Dawn** down as one of the things you must see when it reaches England and the Continent. The American film needs a little of the respect such a film will give it.

*in film art 5 there will be some stills from this.

HERMAN G. WEINBERG.

film opera in u·s·a·

An experiment that promises originality is a series of opera films produced by William De Mille and his wife Clara Beranger, a prominent scenarist. Both had long discussed the old fashioned methods of modern opera and longed for a chance to film one in a really dramatic way, all previous attempts in this direction having proved inadequate. Mr. W. De Mille, associated with the Eastern Studios at Astoria, L.I. interested studio executives and financial backers and this winter succeeded in testing his ideas. It was arranged that he produced a one-reeler of " Pagliacci " purely for experimental purposes. He has a thorough knowledge of music and had studied opera under professionals for twelve years for pure enjoyment although he has never sung professionally. Ever since his youth Mr. De Mille has been fascinated with opera, and like Miss Beranger, he still loves the music but poor settings and bad acting bore him. He sees no reason why a film opera should not be as dramatic as any film without losing its musical values. Here then is a new slant that negates the long established criticism of film aesthetics that film opera is not only impossible but unnecessary. Often a subtle shift in viewpoint brings long hidden possibilities into focus.

The actors do not sing. They do not even pretend to be singing although their actions are perfectly synchronized with voices previously recorded. Henry Hull plays the tragic clown and really acts the part. The music is heard with Hull's lips moving in synchronization with the singers but he does not look the way most tenors do in closeups with broad ungainly gestures and mouth wide open. It is drama, exciting drama. One sees him putting on his makeup and sees the man gradually merge into the clown . . . There are then two separate casts, singers, and actors who interpret the roles ordinarily played by the singers. This is the significant departure from previous methods, eliminating the muggy and poky stylization of operatic acting. It would be well nigh impossible to uncondition the singers from their customary and traditional histrionics and recondition them into the new cinematic mould. The actors simply interpret the drama and the singers

remain anonymous (although all are prominent), the musical background giving birth to a new stylization previously unknown to it. It bids fair to give opera lovers a new sensation and intrigue those previously averse to opera.

Leonard Hacker.

●

interview of fritz arno wagner, continued from page 62

The cameraman should be a painter, but not merely a painter who copies nature and mankind slavishly, without penetration and understanding of character. He must be both a portrait and a landscape painter, and with the popular film he cannot specialise in one department at the expense of the other. He must be a master of all subjects and must find inspiration in everything: Nature, mankind and every other object in life. Even inanimate objects must be made to contribute to his purpose.

The cameraman of quality may not slavishly submit himself to the instructions of the director and carry them out mechanically; he must co-operate with sympathetic intuition and create a picture from his own inner nature, expressing his own life in the frame of a unity of creation. (Eigenes Leben im Rahmen einer Gemeinsamkeit des Schaffens). He must be a constructive artist, but he cannot compose the picture and leave it at that as can the painter and sculptor. He must possess the capacity to combine a succession of a hundred pictures into ont harmonious whole. It is these qualities which enable the author and the director to see on the screen what their minds visualised when creating the manuscript.

The German sound film must prove anew the position of Germany in the film world. We should take an example from the classics of the silent film and concentrate more on the purely visual aspect of the cinema. The optical impression of the picture should always come first; the speech should remain secondary and only produce a poetic effect when it is absolutely necessary, in the same manner as the picture operates poetically. Scenarios by first class writers, expertly filmed by creative artists, are a primary necessity. Art—including the art of the film—is only great and true when it has its roots in the native soil, yet knows no frontiers. If the German film is to maintain its position, the subject matter should not be confined to the heroic alone . . . . "

Mr. Wagner considers *Die Dreigroschenoper* his best achievement. Personally I think *The Love of Jeanne Ney* (1927)—also under the direction of G. W. Pabst—showed us the famous cameraman at his best. In my opinion the perfectly realised opening sequence of this film has never been equalled for sheer photographic brilliance. Even to-day *The Love of Jeanne Ney* can be quoted as a perfect example of craftsmanship, with its judicial panning, finely executed travelling shots and perfect camera set-up. The teamwork between Pabst and Wagner in this film has not been rivalled up to the present day.

Die Driegroschenoper, which came four years after *Jeanne Ney,* was notable for the same perfect understanding between director and cameraman. In a period of stationary cameras, this film stood out above its contemporaries for its beautiful restraint moving camerawork, a special feature of all films photographed by Wagner. *Die Dreigroschenoper* proved anew how perfectly this cameraman has his instrument under control and how fully he realises its potentialities. Always he shoots his material with a definite purpose in mind, but never from all conceivable angles merely to baffle or impress his spectators.

There are other great cameramen: Karl Hoffmann and Daniel Demutzki; Karl Freund and Eduard Tissé. But none of them possesses the distinctive genius of F. A. Wagner. Paul Rotha, in " The Film To-day ", called him the best cameraman in Europe. I would go one further and say:

FRITZ ARNO WAGNER, THE GREATEST CAMERAMAN IN TWO CONTINENTS!

JOHN C. MOORE, Berlin: Spring 1934. (World Copyright)

jottings for "que viva mexico"

MARIE SETON

The following notes, are Eisenstein's and contain some of the ideas he intended to develope by his montage in that saga, only the shadow of which occassionally flashes across the screen in "Thunder Over Mexico".

The Cycles of the Story.

Part I Tropical and primitive Mexico with sex in its primeavel abandon. Background to have been edited from "travelogue" material on Mayan remains.

Part II The Spanish Invasion. The imposition of Catholicism upon paganism. A story of adultery. Bullfighting to be "cut" with Madonna.

Part III Mexico permeated with Spanish Imperialism. The landlord's right over the Peon's bride. The tradition organically developing from Part II.

(The story from which Hollywood made *"Thunder Over Mexico"*, but which being devoid of Eisenstein's political and philosophical interpretation of the historical influences proceeding bears no actual relation to the original conception.)

Part IV Revolution.—Women helping men in the Class Struggle (Since the fighting sequence was never shot Eisenstein reshaped the scenario).

Part V Industrial Mexico enslaved by the Police Force.

Gathering of tension after the death of the boys.

All round people sit motionless and these people embody the characteristics of the Mexican people.

From this immobility the movement shifts over to the Festival of Death.

People mourn all night over the dead.

In the morning they recreate Life—eating, drinking and loving over the graves.

Upon this day of festival Mexico is free of censorship and there is twenty-four hours of political satire.

The symbol of the day (and for Mexico) is the Skull.

The Skull

In Mexico the symbol of the Skull has been every generation's inheritance. It was the chief symbol in the Mayan religion; it was incorporated menacingly into the ritual of Catholicism though its significance remained pagan, so that the repeated representation of it in the religious festivals is purely heathen.

On the day of satiric festival the Skull is everywhere; even the children squatting in the gutters suck sweets made of its grisley image.

The centre of this festival sequence was to have been the dancing of the rumba by peasants and industrial workers in the masks of death's heads. The officials and the Bourgeoisie look on from behind their paper masks of death.

When the workers and peasants tear off their masks, smiling faces are revealed when the bourgeoisie remove theirs nothing but the horny skulls of bedecked and befeathered skeletons are left grinning beneath their plummed hats and mantillas. (These shots, Hollywood edited in the first two reels,—meaninglessly).

So the new social creature growing in Mexico (those who will in the future overthrow the parade of exploitation within and without) shall escape from the shadow of the Skull and find that there is no longer any meaning behind this old symbol of mortality.

The last sequence—Industrial Mexico was conceived as a satire on the regimentating of the Mexican Indian into a stiff necked Fire Brigade and a Police Force parading before the President and the puppet Bishops and Generals.

The word Mexico is written by the Police Force.

(The impression created by the Hollywood editors is that it is a sports demonstration!)

On the engines, the workers watching the manoeuvres of the police smile ironically leaving the shadow of the impression that one day they will overthrow that domination.

●

dislocation

ERIC ELLIOTT

From my waste-paper box (old maid's trousseau) I pluck this scribbled note:—*The effect of a film projected out of mask, when the lower portion of a scene rides over the upper portion, might function usefully. New shapes could be made, new ballet designs out of a dancer cut in half.*

Two halves that beat as one! I should like to see Chaplin dismembered so, his droll feet over his droll arms and face. "Off with their heads!" indeed. And isn't it thrilling, Alice, when we have an edge that can be either the top or the bottom of the picture, if not both?

I don't know whether advanced cinema has toyed with the notion. I will summarise what else occurs to me.

You get some suggestion from patterns reflected by water. Don't grumble if our original phenomena cannot attain that degree of symmetry. Besides, on the screen you can always harmonise movement if you cannot always harmonise form.

Hoping the scope for abstract designs needs no further exemplification, I pass on to notice some arrangements that could bear out a concrete representation.

Collective expressions might be dissundered, to give the emphasis of singular expressions. Feet of savages, pounding in war-dance overhead; spears gesticulating, faces grimacing, underneath.

Or contrasted positions selecting contrasted expressions. A girl self-conscious of slatternly shoes, while she tries to charm the guy from town. Skid our frame halfway, and we share that strain behind her smiles, through an unmissable image above of what naturally belongs below.

Or something disclosed. A traveller stands gazing. We are as preoccupied with his expression as he is with his prospect, neither of us seeing a snake at his feet. Shift up the scene, and the reptile becomes to us conspicuous; as well as a new significance in the unguarded innocence of the face now beneath.

A similar anomaly for the balcony scene, and Romeo and Juliet are gazing *away* from each other. No, I don't think the mind would accept this as being actually true. It would probably occur as a peculiar order of detached observation on our part.

Such conceits might be developed into fanciful ambiguities. If the lovers did proudly look in opposite directions, for instance, an enforced vis-a-vis (through frames out of register) could emphasise the absurdity of their pretence. Other lovers we will imagine to be sitting pretty on a landscape. Arbitrarily rack up, and earth becomes a magic carpet borne on heavenly clouds. I see fair maidens of some other age, with garlands, arms upraised, supporting as if it were an urn the very ship they stand upon.

Suppose Harold Lloyd passes head and shoulders by a window, and a tough leans out with a cudgel. Harold unconcernedly invokes our invisible power to slide him up the screen. The villian checks his aim in time, and turns to scowl *up* at the one who outwitted him. Harold, with a reproving compression on his lips, nods *down*.

Not asking too much, perhaps, by serial transposition, to make even a title read equivocally.

The relative proportions between the two sections are calculated to refit. Height and distance also decide. A camera can cut a man's head off. A framelag allows him to stand astride his own decapitated shoulders. Centaurs, mermaids, hermaphrodites and all other biformities pale before this.

Other truncations can come from an additional mask. The frame-division, or hyphen, may assume a form in itself ; yet equally possible for this differential boundry-line to be fused out of all existence.

The frame is put out of step during printing, of course ; and we need mobility as well as exactitude in the device. A brisk slide of our trombone, and we shuffle positions. Sometimes to accentate an objective rise or fall. Provision, too, for an apparent succession of frames slipping by. Else rhythmic, intermittent stations. (A perceptible border, constant to the screen, might lessen suspicions of a mishap.)

I haven't stretched into profound justifications. Moreover I have kept to the natural (!) aberrations up and down the gate. Leading, consequently, to offside shunts of a frame, for bilateral reconciliation like the Siamese twins?

book review

FOR FILM GOERS ONLY (Faber and Faber, 2/6).

Andrew Buchanan, R. S. Lambert, Mary Field, Paul Rotham, G. A. Lejeune, gave lectures at the Y.W.C.A. about half a year ago. This book is these lectures revised and printed. Buchanan on film as propaganda, Lambert on why we get the films we do, Field on can the film educate, Rotha on the development of the cinema, Lejeune on what to look of in films.

All are frank and, with one exception, useful opinions, offering nothing very new but not lacking in good points. R. S. Lambert probably writes the best matter. There is nothing notable about Rotha's piece, though it is quite interesting.

book review continued

The only writer that seems to say little worth saying (" so far my only qualification for writing on this subject—apart from my connection with a very eminent newspaper—is the fact that I regularly see six or seven films a week and have done so for more years than I care to remember ") is C. A. Lejeune. Her story is so much that of ' guts ' and ' tough stuff ', so much journalistic jargon. Once her " Observer " articles were excellent—the only newspaper ones worth reading—now you hear that British films need more guts, more punch, more of the stuff o' life. Lejeune, in *For Filmgoers Only* says, meaning well, " . . . you not the critics . . . but *you* control the box-office . . . " All right, but don't forget if you read and swallow newspaper criticisms (watch the reviews of those films advertised in big display in the paper) the *critics* control you.

For Filmgoers Only—worth adding to your cinema library.

HE DIED AGAIN by Andrew Buchanan (Arthur Barker, 7/6).

Buchanan writes on war. He shows the hypocritical aspect of those who proclaim that they fight for God and Liberty. And the clergymen who back up this statement knowing very well that Christ's teachings were intended to aim at peacefulness above all. He also shows the influence of the large newspapers. How people will not think for themselves, but instead echo the opinions of the yellow press columns of various daily and Sunday papers. Buchanan does not stress the effect of future war—murdering of millions by slow physical torture—and he dwells on a very important contemporary point: the point of view of the unemployed, half-starved, worker wondering when, and longing for, " another bloody war " because he thinks that would mean, at any rate for a short time, food and clothing. This book has nothing whatever to do with cinema—but war, has a great deal to do with everybody.

comment

film art agents for America: the Gotham Book Mart, 51 West 47th Street, New York.

Agents for Central Europe. Au Pont de L'Europe, 17 Rue Vignon, Paris VIII.

Back numbers are obtainable from the publishing office. Price, number one: 1/5 post 2d., number two: 1/5 post 2d., number three 1/- post 2d. Only a limited number are for sale, and early application is advised.

* * * *

It seems quite a vogue for cinemas to have continental films nowadays. Good old French stage-plays on celluloid, 100% dialogue, 100% non-action, with, of course, notable exceptions.

And a little time ago—another new one. The Curzon Cinema, Mayfair, London. We fear that Mayfair decadent philistines will ' go naughty ' and visit that ' low and degrading affair—the cinema '. This is probably just the case, but the Curzon has been doing better things. After *Unfinished Symphony* comes *Morgenrot* and just a fragment (7 minutes) of Eisenstein's filmpoem *Romance Sentimentale*. This is, apparently, their own presentation,

as no copy exists in England. We could suggest so many films for them; for instance why not Jean Epstein's *L'Homme a L'Hispano*? . . . . Incidentally, the architecture of the Curzon, both inside and out, is far in advance of that of any other cinema in London.

• • • •

Seymour Stern, a well-known member of the American avantgarde film movement, is in New Mexico where for the next eight months he will be directing an Indian film. With him as cameramen are Floyd Crosby who shot *Tabu* with Flaherty and Murnau, and Henwar Rodakiewicz who made several unusual films (Portrait of the Artist, the Barge, and now cutting Face of New England).

• • • •

Another American, Herman G. Weinberg, is doing interesting work. He has made two previous films *A City Symphony* and *Autumn Fire*. Now Mr. Weinberg is planning *Rhapsody* which promises much. " A poem in picture and sound . . . the rushing emotions of two young people very much in love . . . the parallel in nature . . . the full fragrance and bloom of the first spring . . . the flowering of this romance to an exuberant climax . . . . " We hope to publish some stills in our next number.

Another important activity of Mr. Weinberg is running the Little Theatre, Baltimore. Here is a cinema which has shown *Fin du Monde, Waltz Time, Les Deux Orphelines, Ariane, Romance Sentimentale,* etc. etc. etc., and plans to show *Suburbia, Niemansland, Mother, Poil de Carotte* and so on.

Its policy and the enterprise of its organiser speak for themselves.

• • • •

We understand that Harold Lowenstein, our Madrid correspondent, is attempting to introduce *Se Ha Fugado* (A fugitive has flown) into England. He writes that though this Spanish film is far from brilliant cinema it is of special interest as being by one of Spain's best directors, Benito Perojo.

• • • •

Vaughan College, Liecester is the home of the excellent Liecester Film Society. At their annual meeting they showed Pabst's Joyless Street, and other performances have included such films as Ecstasy, 14 Juillet, La Maternelle, etc. The secretary is E. Irving Richards, Vaughan College, Liecester.

Two other progressive societies who would like to hear from prospective members:

The Birmingham Film Society, secretary: S. G. Hawes, 163 Pershore Road, Birmingham.

The Manchester and Salford Workers' Film Society, secretary: R. Cordwell, 69 Liverpool Street, Salford 5.

Berlin's last avant-garde cinema, Kamera, has been closed by Nazi authorities. On the grounds that it showed old French and American films and, still worse, old German films by jews . . . .

News from THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF CINEMATOGRAPHIC ART to be held this year in Venice says that:
England will be represented by *Man of Aran* and *Life of Don Juan*.
France will send *Bouboule, First Negro King* and *Atalante*, a new film by Rene Clair and shorts.
Germany will send *The Refugees* by Ucicky and other films.
Czechoslovakia will send *Extase* and a film by Karel Plicka.
Holland will send *Puberty* by Hans Sluizer and films by Ivens and Walter Ruttmann.
America amongst many films will send *Cane Fire* sent by the Seven Seas Corporation of Hollywood.
Sweden will send a film by Gustav Molander and *Aktiebologet Wive*.
Austria will send a film by Willy Forst.
Norway will send a documentary.
Other countries from whom it is hoped to obtain films include: Argentine, Mexico, Turkey and Portugal. Up to now it is said that twenty nations will be represented.

It will be remembered that a former congress was held in Brussels a few years ago, but was, owing to the bad films, fairly unsuccessful. . . .

• • • •

The correspondence film courses organised by *film art* started with four students. Now there are students in America, Germany, Ireland and England. Also practical lessons in camerawork and lighting, even acting, have all been arranged. Incidentally, the money obtained from these courses as well as paying their expenses, help pay some of *film art's* bills owed, it seems, since before the Crimean war.

• • • •

Word has just been received that the Curzon Cinema, Mayfair, London, is to present, after Rapt, Together We Two and Refugees by Ucicky with photography by F. A. Wagner. It will be remembered that first stills of this latter were published in the second issue of *film art*.

●

the cinema to-day

Advertisement for *Man's Castle*:
In the quiet of her heart at night she heard the beckoning of tender love . . . . whispering its ageless song . . . . entwining their beating hearts in the perfect rhythm of everlasting romance.
See them together . . . .
SPENCER TRACY as " Bill "
and LORETTA YOUNG as " Little Whoosits ".

• • • •

In a trade advertisement for *The Show Off*:
M. G. M. believes in its STAR policy . . . . *box-office names are all that count nowadays* . . . . (our italics)

• • • •

Trade description of DIRECTION of film . . . " pedestrian ".
Trade description of STORY of *Lady Killer* . . . . " meaty ".

• • • •

Overheard at the end of the press show of *Tarzan the Fearless*:
" My dear I just couldn't say anything . . . . I just sat there and thought to myself ' you gorgeous beast, you gorgeous beast ' . . . . "

Paul Holt in the DAILY EXPRESS on *Lady of the Boulevards*:
" Anna has most of the essential attributes that go to make a star. Soft and mysterious—a delicate hot-house flower—another queen of synthetic sex ".

• • • •

And now a little lesson in cinema theory. (E. A. Baughan in the NEWS CHRONICLE March 10th 1934):
" A film is made by a succession of episodes—the invention of the movie camera helped to link these episodes together. The players are not now rooted to one spot for each episode. But there can never be movement which is possible on the stage and to break an effect of monotony each scene has to be shot from many angles. That quite breaks the illusion and loosens the tension of a scene "!

• • • •

From an article in an American magazine of film and stage. The featured article was a discussion on the future of musical shows, both film and stage:
" . . . . the trouble is the public have seen bare legs, bare shoulders, bare backs, and now we are wondering what to show them next . . . . "

• • • •

Articles and an advertisement suggested to us:
Overtonal Montage . . . . by Katherine Hepburn.
Clark Gable is perfect . . . . by Dziga Vertov.
" Mux keeps our undies fresh . . . . "857 out of 856 of the students of the Moscow School of Cinema.

• • • •

We welcome suitable quotations for this section. Please state the name of the journals or individuals from whom they are obtained, though not necessarily for publication.

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film art apologises for any inconvenience caused to readers or bookshops by the lateness in the publication of this number, caused mainly by a delay in some of our foreign notes.

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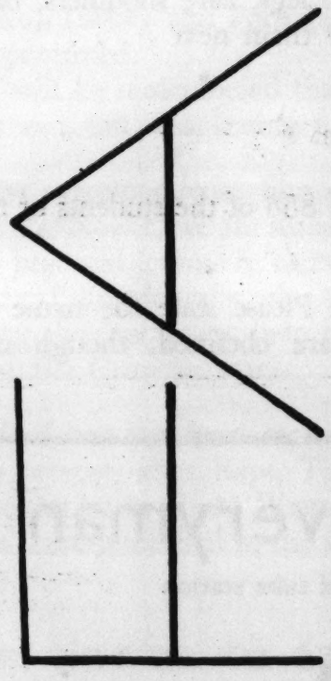

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